

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP:	PLANNING COMMISSION
DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING:	Wednesday, May 12, 1999, 1:00 p.m., City Council Chambers, First Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska
MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:	Russ Bayer, Ann Bleed, Gerry Krieser, Joe Wilson and Steve Duvall (Cecil Steward, Rick Wallace, Barb Hopkins and Greg Schwinn absent); John Bradley, Kent Morgan, Mike Brienzo and Jean Walker of the Planning Department ; media, other department representatives and other interested citizens.
STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING:	Special Planning Commission Meeting Capital Improvements Program/Transportation Improvements Program

Vice-Chair, Russ Bayer, called the meeting to order.

Kent Morgan, Assistant Director of Planning, gave introductory remarks. This is a special public hearing on three separate but related items: 1) The Planning Commission edition of the City's 6-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP); 2) the draft six year Transportation Improvements Program (TIP) for the greater Lincoln metropolitan area; and Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 94-36, for the Holmes Lake Park Trail.

Mr. Morgan advised that, as specified in the City Charter and other regulations, the role of the Planning Commission in the CIP and TIP processes is to determine if the capital projects being requested by the various departments are in conformance, or are not in conformance, with the adopted City-County Comprehensive Plan.

According to the City's Charter, Council ordinances and resolutions dealing with capital improvements cannot be acted upon until a finding of Plan conformity has been made. Mr. Morgan noted that the Charter does NOT prohibit the City Council from approving capital projects which are not in conformance with the Plan; but only that a finding of conformity needs to be established. The exception to this rule are transportation projects included in the TIP. Federal regulations

require that TIP projects be in conformance with the local area Plan -- thus, local entities could not undertake an improvement project if it were determined to be not in conformance with the Plan.

Referring to the CIP/TIP document, Mr. Morgan noted that in column 9 of Form B for each department's project, Planning staff has provided the Commission with a recommended finding of conformity. As in past years, we have employed a four-tiered approach to the conformity finding; a project can be found to be in one of the following categories:

- ICWP - In conformance with Plan
- GCP - Generally conforms with Plan
- NICP - Not in conformance with Plan
- NIP - Not in Plan

Mr. Morgan pointed out that all of the projects in this year's capital reports are being recommended as being either "in conformance with Plan" or "generally in conformance with Plan."

Mr. Morgan also advised the Commission that the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (or, MPO) Technical Committee met last week to review the draft TIP. Some of their requested changes will be discussed later in today's meeting; however, no changes to the Plan conformity recommendations of staff were identified; that is, the Tech Committee found that all of the TIP projects were in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Morgan informed the Commission that with regard to the CIP, the Planning Commission recommendations will be forwarded to the Mayor for incorporation into the City Council Edition of the CIP. This report will be released in conjunction with the City's Operating Budget, probably sometime in June. The Council will have a hearing on both the operating and capital budgets in mid-August, with approval typically occurring in late August, with the City's new Fiscal Year beginning on Sept. 1st. The Planning Commission action as to the TIP conformity findings will be forwarded to the Officials Committee for their consideration sometime within the next four to six weeks. This is necessary in order to meet State scheduling requirements. The Lincoln TIP will be included in the State TIP, which will be reviewed by the State in August and September. The State TIP takes effect October 1st.

Mr. Morgan reminded the Commission that the City Council only approves the first year of the CIP; no formal action is taken on the remaining five years, although it is part of their discussion of the capital improvement needs. The exception, once again, to this practice are projects in the TIP. The TIP is considered by the State

and Federal governments as a "programming document" that involves 2 three year periods. Thus, for their purposes, the State and Feds view projects in the first three years as available for implementation. This results from the variable funding cycles of the State and Federal governments, and of the need to provide multi-year funding for many larger projects.

With regard to Comprehensive Plan Amendment #94-36 for the Holmes Lake Park Trail, the Planning Commission recommendation will be forward to the elected officials for their consideration. The Amendment is being considered as part of the CIP/TIP process because the Holmes Lake Park Trail is a proposed capital improvement in the draft CIP, and the amendment is necessary in order for a finding of conformity to be made for the project.

Bleed inquired how the determination is made as to conformance or general conformance. Mr. Morgan suggested that typically, if we can identify something in the plan easily and specifically on one of the maps, it is found to be in conformance; if it is more in the spirit or a general enhancement, it is considered to be in general conformance.

The Commission then proceeded with public hearing.

Finance Department

Pershing Auditorium - No public comment. No questions by Commission
Communications - No public comment. No questions by Commission

Fire Department

No public comment. No questions by Commission.

Park & Recreation Department and Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 94-36

Jim Morgan, Director of Parks & Recreation, discussed the Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the Holmes Lake Park Trail. As part of the planning with the neighborhood, the road was moved as far north as physically possible to avoid private property takings on the south side of the street. This was accomplished by doing a lot of work with the neighborhood. It was known at that time that they could not then build a sidewalk on the north side of the street. This amendment shows the Holmes Lake Trail connection between Holmes Lake Park and Pioneers Blvd. parallel to the western edge of Holmes Golf Course and along the western edge of the dam, and the connecting link to Prescott and Bancroft Streets. This is being done to provide safe

access to the park. This is a major change mostly being done in response to public concern. This trail can be funded in the first year and that is the reason for this Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

There was no testimony in opposition.

Public Works (Includes TIP Agencies)

Startran - No public comment. No questions by Commission.

Parking - Bleed assumes that in the Downtown, the specific lots have not been identified. Virendra Singh of Public Works advised that no site has yet been selected. They will be looking at both the east and west areas.

City: Streets and Highways (TIP) - Mike Brienzo of Planning staff advised that the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Technical Committee met on May 7, 1999, and reviewed the TIP. Mr. Brienzo presented several revisions as recommended by the Technical Committee, none of which are substantial, but they are important to clarify for the record. The revisions do not change the identification or the scope of the projects.

Bayer noted that this CIP approves the widening of "O" from 53rd to east of 70th to six lanes. Mr. Brienzo reminded the Commission that the Comprehensive Plan Amendment for that designation has already gone through the process and was approved by the Planning Commission. This is the funding package for that project that was previously approved. Bayer was interested in how the staff is able to make these cost predictions. Mr. Brienzo stated that there are some very good professionals on the city and state staff. These predictions are revisited each year to make sure we're on target.

Bleed referred to the Beltway funds on page 66, item #11, commenting that she is impressed that we have plans for right-of-way construction and demo funds. "Are we that close to actually doing something?" Mr. Singh advised that demonstration funds were allocated by the feds. The money will be available to Lincoln on a percentage basis. This coming year, Lincoln will have 26% of the 4.25 million. That money has been allocated to get into right-of-way elements and final design concept of the south beltway only. That money would not provide us all of the right-of-way we need but it is a good start.

State of Nebraska (TIP) - No public comment. No questions by Commission.

Lancaster County (TIP) - No public comment. No questions by Commission.

Lincoln Airport Authority (TIP) - No public comment. No questions by Commission.

Railroad Transportation Safety District (TIP) - No public comment. No questions by Commission.

Storm Sewers - No public comment. No questions by Commission.

Maintenance - No public comment. No questions by Commission.

Public Utilities

Water - No public comment. No questions by Commission.

Wastewater - Gary Brandt of Public Utilities, highlighted some of the infrastructure improvements relating to collection systems. The bulk of the efforts of expansion are shown on p.118, listing all those in the 6-year program. Salt Valley Relief Sewer basin is a major project in that 6-year period; phase one will be completed this year. The rest of the basins -- N.E. Salt Creek, Antelope, Oak Creek, Beal Slough, West "O" -- are all based upon actions that have occurred either through the Comprehensive Plan process or some of the recent annexations and requests coming through.

With regard to the Stevens Creek project, Mr. Brandt advised that there are program monies out in the year 2003-2004 to begin preliminary engineering studies for actual basic construction. Through the past few years, it has been a facility planning effort where Public Utilities has worked with the Fringe Growth Committee and there was a directional growth element where they did estimates and updates. This study is almost a preliminary engineering design effort.

Bleed pointed out the 9 million dollars for the nitrification studies. Mr. Brandt advised that the nitrification facilities have had prior year appropriations. Bleed asked whether this is the major cost that we have to come into compliance with the new regulations for treatment. Mr. Brandt explained that to be the cost that has been estimated to take the existing flows received at facilities and bring them into compliance. It does not get into any future flows.

Bleed inquired about the Salt Valley Basin relief improvements. Mr. Brandt explained that to be phased improvements of a parallel sewer to the existing Salt Valley system. The first phase will be completed this summer.

Bayer noted that of the 43 million dollars identified over the next six years, nearly 80% is going to come out of utility revenues. Mr. Brandt concurred that the revenues would

come from the wastewater charges on the customers' water bills. Revenue bonds were also funded by those revenues but are spread over a longer period of time. Bayer noted, then, that the likelihood of these projects actually occurring are high because the revenue will come in. Mr. Brandt concurred.

Landfill - No public comment. No questions by the Commission.

Urban Development

No public comment. No questions by the Commission.

Lincoln Electric System

Bayer inquired about the wind energy turbine which has been erected near the Interstate. He believes it is attractive and wondered whether it is paying for itself. He also inquired about the additional \$6 on the electric bill. Bruce Merrill of LES explained that the renewable energy program does pay what we view as the incremental cost of the renewable option. Wind is more expensive than our existing resources and that is the reason for the \$6 increment. If the users are willing to support the renewable energy and pay that incremental cost, then we will build it and take the energy into our system. The existing wind turbine generator today is covering its costs. The normal rate would cover the base cost and the incremental cost is covered by the renewable energy. It would pay for itself with the exception of the extra \$6. This was figured on a life of 15 years. Bayer equated this to asking for \$72 per household for 15 years to help cover the cost of the renewable energy. Mr. Merrill stated that LES is also making attempts to get some of the funds from the federal government.

It was pointed out that the CIP refers to the third and fourth turbine. The second unit is not in this CIP because it is tagged onto the existing budget; however, it is not yet built. LES has committed to build the second turbine in the same general area as the first.

Wilson asked whether LES has run through the Y2K issues. Mr. Merrill believes they have tested all except the second Rokeby unit. Mid Continent Area Power Pool has done several Y2K tests and they have had no problems thus far.

Libraries

Bleed noted that none of the new libraries are in this CIP. Carol Connor, Director of Libraries stated that those new libraries were passed last year and the money is in the bond issue. The process of approving those library branches with the Planning Commission was completed awhile ago; the bond issue passed; bonds were sold; the money was deposited; and now they are in process with the Library Board to build the

two branches. The Commission was confused with the funds not being in the CIP if the libraries are not built. John Bradley, Director of Planning, explained that bond funds are treated differently. It was shown as a 98-99 project. Once the bonds are sold and the money deposited, the project does not continue to be shown during its construction because the funds have been committed through that bond sale.

Aging

No public comment. No questions by the Commission.

Police

Bayer asked whether the money for take-home cruisers introduced by Chief Casady would be in the CIP. Sgt. Sherrill of the Lincoln Police Department believes that there would be a future CIP request for some additional parking stalls. Chief Casady wants to do it as a phased-in type project. He would imagine it will be at least a 5-year plan. There is nothing proposed in the next budget year beginning Sept. 1 at this time. The 30 stalls being proposed in this CIP are almost an immediate need; the police garage is taking on service of light trucks and other vehicles for the city; some of the stalls would be devoted to the new cruisers. The cruisers are a budgeted item for this next year. They are not a CIP item because they do not have a useful life of 15 years.

There being no further public testimony, public hearing was closed.

FY 1999-2005 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

May 12, 1999

Duvall moved approval of the staff recommendation regarding conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Wilson. Bayer noted that there are no items that are not in conformance. This involves over 300 million dollars of improvements for our community over the next six years.

Bleed commented that she found this format to be easier to read and understand than in past years.

Motion to approve the staff recommendation carried 5-0: Duvall, Bayer, Bleed, Wilson and Krieser voting 'yes'; Hopkins, Wallace, Schwinn and Steward absent.

DRAFT FY 2000-2002 AND FY 2003-2005 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE LINCOLN AND LANCASTER COUNTY AREA.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

May 12, 1999

Duvall moved approval of the staff recommendation, as revised, as to conformity with the Comprehensive Plan, seconded by Wilson and carried 5-0: Duvall, Bayer, Bleed, Wilson and Krieser voting 'yes'; Hopkins, Wallace, Schwinn and Steward absent.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 94-36
TO INCLUDE THE HOLMES LAKE PARK TRAIL IN
FIGURE 38, "LINCOLN AREA CURRENT AND FUTURE
TRAILS NETWORK".

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION BY PLANNING COMMISSION:

May 12, 1999

Bleed moved approval, seconded by Duvall and carried 5-0: Duvall, Bayer, Bleed, Wilson and Krieser voting 'yes'; Hopkins, Wallace, Schwinn and Steward absent.

Bayer expressed appreciation to all of the department heads and representatives for taking time to be available for comments and questions.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

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